



P-RTI: Tier 1—High-Quality Core Instruction
Reflect: Tier 1 Instructional Techniques
Teaching Vocabulary Words Activities

Continue to build your understanding of Tier 1 instructional techniques by completing these activities related to teaching important vocabulary words. Refer to the online course for information about this instructional technique.

Part I: Choosing Word to Teach

Consider the words in the story transcribed below called *The Three Little Fish and the Big Bad Shark* (Geist & Gorton, 2007). Underline all the possible words you might consider teaching. Then, in the space below, narrow it down to four words.

*The Three Little Fish and the Big Bad Shark**

Once upon a time, there lived a mama fish and her three little fish, Jim, Tim and Kim. "It is now time," said Mama, "For each of you to make a home in the deep blue sea." So off they went.

The first little fish, named Jim, swam away and met a sea horse playing in some seaweed. "Can I have some of the seaweed so I can build a house?"

"Take as much as you can carry," said the sea horse. Jim gathered the seaweed and made a weedy little house.

Jim had just finished building his seaweed house when he heard the big bad shark knocking at the door. "Little fish, little fish, let me come in."

The Little fish trembled and replied, "Not by the skin of my finny fin fin!" "Then I'll munch and I'll crunch and I'll smash your house in," roared the shark.

So the big bad shark munched and he crunched and he ate up every bit of the seaweed house. And Jim swam away - just in time.

Soon Jim found his brother. Tim said, "Don't worry, Jim. We fish stick together! You can help me build a sandy little house."

Jim and Tim had just started to relax in the sandy little house when the big bad shark came knocking at the door. "Little fish, little fish, let me come in." To which the brave little fish replied, "Not by the skin of my finny fin fin!" "Then I'll munch and I'll crunch and I'll smash your house in," roared the shark.

So the big bad shark munched and he crunched until he got a sandy mouthful and the house crumbled. Jim and Tim swam and swam...

...until they reached their sister, Kim. Kim was setting up her house in an old wooden ship. "The big bad shark destroyed our houses." "Don't worry. You can live with me," said Kim. And they did.

The three little fish had just finished lunch when they heard the big bad shark knocking at their door. "Little fish, little fish, let me come in." To which the smart fish replied, "Not by the skin of my finny fin fin!" "Then I'll munch and I'll crunch and I'll smash your house in," roared the shark.

The big bad shark munched and he crunched but he could not smash the house in.... and all his teeth fell out!

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4 words to teach: _____

After identifying your selected words, return to the online course for answers. The answers and their explanations will help you gauge your understanding. If the course is inaccessible, gauge your understanding by comparing your answers to your peers' answers.

Part 2: Identify Child-Friendly Definitions

After you have identified the words you will explicitly teach children, it is important to provide a child-friendly definition that explains what the word means. The term *child-friendly definition* refers to a sentence that explains what a word means in a more complete and straightforward way than dictionary definitions (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2008). A child-friendly definition often includes information about who or where you might use the word by saying things like, "Someone who is ____ might ____" or "If something is ____, it is ____."

Begin to explore your understanding by identifying the child-friendly definition for each pair of sample definitions below. When ready, return to the online course and click on the answer key to reveal which ones are the most child-friendly. If the course is inaccessible, gauge your understanding by comparing your answers to your peers' answers.

For each pair of definitions, which one is the most child-friendly?

- A beach is a shore of a body of water covered with sand, gravel, or rock.
- If someone is at a beach, they are at a sandy or rocky place next to water.
- Advice is a recommendation about a decision.
- If someone gives advice, she has an idea of what to do.
- If someone gathers, he is bringing things together.
- Gather means to accumulate something.

Part 3: Practice Writing Child-Friendly Definitions

Now try writing your own child-friendly definitions. The dictionary definition is provided for the target vocabulary. Modify this definition to explain the meaning of a word in everyday language that children can understand. It is important to make sure that your child-friendly definition does not contain another sophisticated word that students will not know. You need to use words that convey the more basic underlying concept. If you don't think students will understand the more basic underlying concept, then the word is too hard to teach at this time.

When ready, return to the online course and click on the answer key to reveal a child-friendly definition. If the course is inaccessible, gauge your understanding by comparing your answers to your peers' answers.

Worry (To feel or experience concern or anxiety; to afflict with mental distress or agitation)

Child-friendly definition: _____

Tremble (To shake slightly but uncontrollably; to be affected with great fear or anxiety)

Child-friendly definition: _____

Destroy (To demolish something or reduce something to fragments)

Child-friendly definition: _____

Ship (A large wind-driven or engine-powered vessel designed to carry passengers or cargo over water, especially across the ocean)

Child-friendly definition: _____